



THE ADIRONDACK COUNCIL
Defending the East's Last Great Wilderness

October 21, 2005

The Honorable Kevin Martin
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

IB Docket No. 05-221

Dear Chairman Martin:

It has come to my attention that the FCC has set as one of its highest priorities efforts to accelerate developing broadband access in America. In my capacity as spokesman for The Adirondack Council, I strongly urge that the Commission put a strong emphasis on solutions that will support broadband coverage in rural parts of America. Despite significant broadband coverage throughout the U.S., many areas still have inadequate coverage. I believe that the satellite industry, because of its ability to provide service everywhere, is one sector which can play a vital role in bringing broadband to millions more Americans.

I understand technology exists which will allow cell phones to receive a signal from either a cell tower or a satellite. In order to overcome the high cost typically associated with mobile satellite systems, we are looking forward to the availability of advanced hybrid satellite/terrestrial systems. A hybrid network will allow a cell phone user to use a cell phone on existing cell towers or to use a satellite network if the cell phone network is inoperative. This assures virtually every location in the U.S. will receive broadband access, especially rural and underserved areas.

Not only could this approach allow for communications to and from virtually any outdoor location, it could also allow first responders to have an affordable, ubiquitous, redundant and interoperable communications system so crucial to homeland security.

I understand that the Commission will soon determine whether to divide the remaining one-third of the 2 GHz mobile satellite service ("MSS") spectrum between TMI/TerreStar Networks Inc. ("TerreStar") and ICO Satellite Services ("ICO") or take another approach.

I strongly urge the FCC to move expeditiously on this item and support the allocation of this spectrum on a "2x10" basis to these two satellite operators that have already demonstrated a commitment to compete and offer these services. Thank you for your consideration of my views.

No. of Copies rec'd. 044
List ABCDE

The Adirondack Council is an 18,000-member, privately funded, not-for-profit organization with members in all 50 United States. Founded in 1975, the Adirondack Council's mission is to ensure the ecological integrity and wild character of the New York's six-million-acre Adirondack Park. The Adirondack Park is the largest American park outside of Alaska. Yosemite, Yellowstone, Glacier and Grand Canyon National Parks would all fit easily inside the Adirondack Park. Created in 1892, it contains 90 percent of all roadless Wilderness from Maine to Georgia and the largest expanse of never-cut ancient forest in the Northeastern United States.

The Adirondack Park is also a lived-in landscape, with 92 towns, 130,000 permanent residents and nearly 10 million visitors a year. In 1924, New York State passed the first in a series of laws designed to protect the Park's natural beauty by banning all billboards and off-premises business signs. Today, the Adirondack Park Agency must approve the construction of anything taller than the treetops (40 feet). These policies have allowed us to maintain an isle of green forest in one of the most densely populated regions of North America.

However, the desire to improve emergency communications and cell phone coverage in the rugged terrain of the Adirondacks is causing state and local officials to ignore land-use controls in the rush to install tower-based equipment. The higher the number of viable alternatives to tall, stand-alone towers (especially on mountain peaks) we have at our disposal, the greater chance we will have to protect our amazing legacy here in the Adirondack Park. We urge you to encourage this new use of broadband and satellite technology by approving TerreStar's application.

Sincerely,



John F. Sheehan
Director of Communications
The Adirondack Council
Media & Government Relations Office
342 Hamilton Street
Albany, NY 12210
518-432-1770

Main Office
103 Hand Avenue, Suite 1
Elizabethtown, NY 12932
518-873-2240

cc: Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy
Commissioner Jonathan S. Adelstein
Commissioner Michael J. Copps
Secretary of the Commission